

HISTORIAN

On the web – www2.datasync.com/history

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

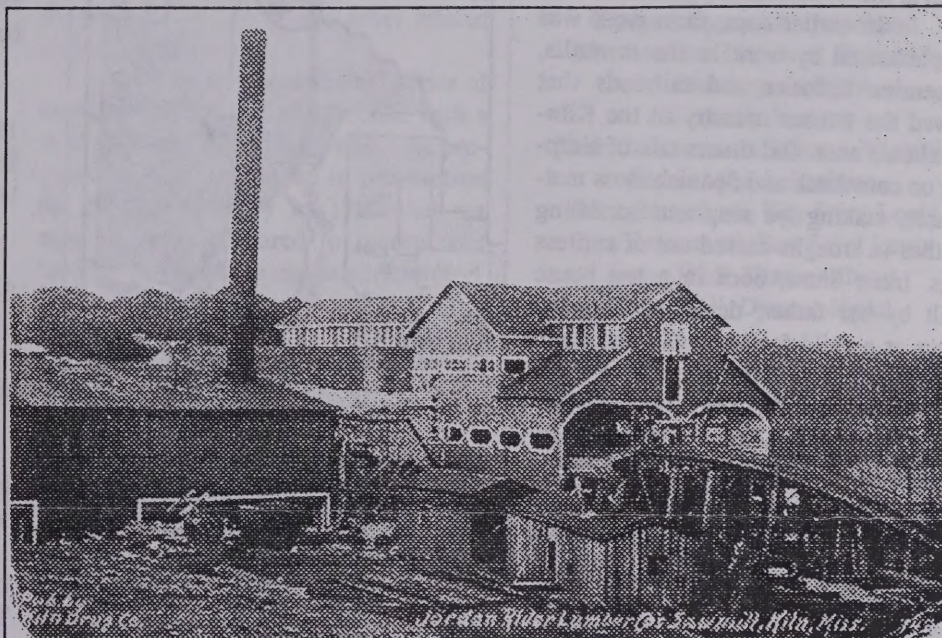
May 1998

MAY HAPPENINGS

The May meeting of the Hancock County Historical Society will be held at noon on Thursday, May 21 at the Kate Lobrano House, 108 Cue Street, Bay Saint Louis.

Guest speaker will be David André, president of the Mississippi Sound Maritime Historical Foundation. He will discuss the Mississippi Sound Maritime Museum planned for the old Carnegie Library building in Gulfport and plans to build and sail a circa-1900 two-masted schooner.

Call 467-4090 for luncheon reservations at \$6.00. Please call early to assure your reservation and to help us plan seating.



Jordan River Lumber Company Sawmill, Kiln, Mississippi

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Pilgrimage was a great success. The Bay Waveland Garden Club and "Gather Ye Rosebuds" both presented a variety of homes and gardens to the public. I have been told that this is the largest free pilgrimage of homes in the world. Congratulations, Coastians, on this important endeavor.

Virgil Nelson of Slidell brought us another treasure: four wonderful photographs of Kiln's past. One of them is reproduced above right. Pictures from the past are very dear to the society. Please check your albums and share yours with us.

We are saddened to learn that Ann Anderson will be closing the Anderson Genealogical Library at the (See **President** on page 3)

CATAHOULA

The first inhabitants of the Catahoula community were the Choctaw and Catahoula Indians who remained until their removal by the federal government in the 19th century. Their legacy remains in the name of this rural community as well as in the trace of Indian blood proudly claimed by many of today's residents.

Catahoula remains sparsely populated. Its white inhabitants bear the names of the earliest French settlers: Ladner, Necaise, Moran (Morin). Their black neighbors who comprise one of the largest non-white groups in the county, are descendants of 19th century

settlers who, like their white neighbors, eked out a living by subsistence farming well into the 1940s.

Catahoula's population is estimated between 600 and 1,000, depending on who's guessing and which boundary lines he's using. Roger James, former Superintendent of the Bay-Waveland School District, believes that Catahoula starts "at Orphan Creek," named for the many lost baby animals found there in the past. Woodrow Ladner, who lives on his 24 acres near the homes of four of his children in what he calls "my own little Hyannisport," claims that Catahoula starts at Firetower Road. Some jokingly call it "a suburb of Kiln."

(Continued on page 2)

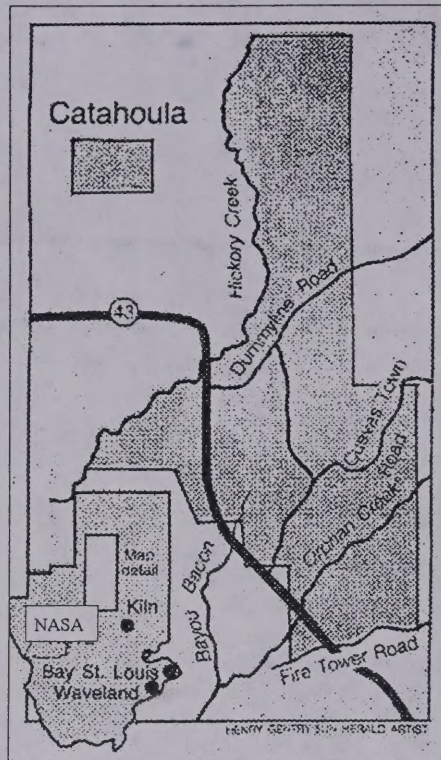
These characteristics describe today's Cathoulans: strong dedication to education and an equally strong attachment to the land, the family and the church. Farming has declined but cattle and horse ranches are prevalent. The Moran family whose members own large tracts along Cuevas Town Road, take pride in their thoroughbred horses and the family skills in training them for races at the Louisiana tracks.

In earlier days, farm work was supplemented by work in the sawmills, turpentine factories and railroads that served the lumber industry in the Kiln-Catahoula area. Old timers talk of sleeping on cornshuck and Spanish moss mattresses, making lye soap and scrubbing clothes in troughs carved out of cypress logs. Irene Shaw, born in a log house built by her father, described shearing sheep as a child for 10 cents a head and getting up before dawn to milk 15 cows before leaving for school. When the federal WPA jobs came to the region, many worked as road laborers for 50 cents a day.

Extreme poverty led some to supplement their meager wages by making illegal whiskey. "It was a community thing, and they all worked together making the stuff and hiding it," said Melva Necaise, daughter of a moonshiner. "When somebody was caught, they'd say it was their own rather than tell it was all the community's. Federal officers were tolerant if they knew the bootleggers were just trying to make ends meet. But if there were big rigs of people trying to get rich, they'd make sure they got time."

Mrs. Necaise admits to making and selling moonshine as late as the 1960s to pay the medical expenses of her late husband. "If I hadn't made moonshine, I wouldn't be sitting on these 200 acres," she said "I said I'd either lose the land or make moonshine, and I decided to take my chances. When everything was paid off, I quit," she said.

Change came to Catahoula with the opening of the National Space Technology Laboratories, later renamed



Stennis Space Center, which took about half of the Catahoula area for its buffer zone. While many mourned the loss of the land, they also recognized that the space center brought jobs. Earlier hopes pinned on the oil and gas industries faded quickly. The rich natural gas deposit in the Catahoula Field, reputed to be one of the largest in the Southeast, has brought no prosperity. The wells, owned by the Hunt family of Texas, are capped, their pumps silent.

"We thought it would be a boom but it went and never came back." Doris Ladner said of the wells. "It might come back," she added, but nobody in Catahoula is counting on it. "There's no big industry here," she said. "Not since the turpentine days. We had a turpentine still here, but it closed in the 'teens. I believe it was because they ran out of trees. They clear-cut all the forests." The Ladners sold some timber from their land, but very little, Mrs. Ladner said. "It looks pitiful when they strip the forest and don't replant." Fortunately nobody is doing this today, she said, and the Ladners plan to keep their trees.

Dependence on low-wage jobs has been replaced by faith in education as well as greater opportunities in the region. The young are now going off to college, but their education is not geared toward making good in the big city as the old farm-to-town myths would have it. They return to the family land, much of it subdivided among children. Thus, a drive along Dumbyline Road reveals one Necaise mailbox after the next, and on Cuevas town Road the mailboxes all belong to Morans.

Edith Back

(The foregoing is an update of a 1985 article in *The Sun Herald* by Edith Bierhorst Back and Nan Patton Ehrbright.)

SMOKING'S A PUBLIC HAZARD

Following is a news item from the *Daily Picayune* of Sept. 6, 1900:

Some of the railroad companies have adopted a good plan, and it is being accepted by other large corporations.

It is to refuse to employ any man who is a habitual cigarette smoker. This will have a more permanent effect than any other to stop the habit which is not looked upon from a moral point of view, but from business sense.

Several years ago railroad employees were noted for the tenacity they had in hanging to the liquor drinking habit. A fine engineer in those days was generally a fine whisky drinker. He carried it with him and took his drink more often than he gave his engine water. That has played out.

Railroad men now do not drink but little compared to what they used to while on duty, and some roads are so strict that if an employee goes into a saloon while on or off duty he is discharged. The consequence is the whisky-drinking habit has almost ceased on railroads, and this will be the case soon in regard to the habit of smoking cigarettes, for one is about as dangerous to public safety as the other.

President from page 1
end of the month.

The library has been in several different locations since it was established, including Bay Saint Louis. Its most recent home was the Walthall School in Hattiesburg. It is indeed a great loss for this excellent research facility to close. We express our appreciation to Ann for the years it was in existence.

Mark Kelso has redesigned the Historical Society's web site and made grand improvements. For those of you who have NOT YET moved into cyberspace, our homepage presents the state flag of Mississippi in the upper left corner of a gold parchment page, followed immediately by the name and address of the society in very handsome blue letters. Then there are numerous links to click:

- Letter of greeting from the president.
- Photograph of the office interior
- Photo of the Kate Loblano House
- Biographies of the Board of Directors
- Our Constitution and Bylaws
- Membership data and application
- Items for sale (books, cards etc.)
- Upcoming events, weekly update
- Tercentenary events
- Map of Hancock County
- Local stories, Hurricanes, fires etc.
- Invitation to submit research questions
- The Historian, present & past issues
- Archival research available on the site

This site alone is justification for your buying that computer you have been thinking about. If you are still not convinced, stop by the Loblano House and take a look at it.

Charles H. Gray

ST. STANISLAUS STUDENTS TOUR LOBRANO HOUSE

On May 4th Kathleen Kemp brought a group of St. Stanislaus students for a tour of the Loblano house and a history lecture by Charles Gray. Every year she brings about 500 students from all over the county to visit the Historical Society, the court house, the Sea Coast Echo and other civic organizations and businesses. Many of the students come back later to inquire about their own interests.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY CONDUCTS HISTORY CLASSES

The Hancock County Historical Society is participating in the Professional Certification Program with the City of Bay Saint Louis and Pearl River Community College Workforce Center.

During April Charles Gray, president of the Historical Society, conducted four one-hour classes and four one-hour tours for employees of the city, the county, the library and other related civic organizations.

There will be a second series of these programs scheduled in June with a total of nearly 200 participants. The program has been developed in preparation for our Tercentenary in 1999 that we may be better prepared to present our heritage to visitors to our celebrations.

ELDERHOSTEL CLASS GIVEN AT METHODIST ASSEMBLY

On April 27, Historical Society president Charles Gray addressed the Elderhostel group visiting the United Methodist Gulfside Assembly near Buccaneer Park. Representatives from about seven states participated in the event. The guests were enchanted with the Gulf Coast and its history and several expressed their intention to return for a longer visit.

TO ARMS



The official arms of John Hancock, signer of the Declaration of Independence, for whom Hancock County was named. *Encyclopedia Heraldica*

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Joan Lee, Diamondhead
Karen Dimarco, Diamondhead
Penny Jones, Waveland
Grady Perkins, Coronado, California
Tempie Evans, Coronado, California
Jerilyn Faulstich, Diamondhead
Barbara Schloegel, Bay Saint Louis
Virgil Nelson, Slidell
Mary Nelson, Slidell
Gladys Majeau, Diamondhead
Martha Ann Bannister, Picayune
Jim Ownbey, Gulfport
Jill Dill, Lakeshore
Herb Casanova, Richmond, Virginia
Gloria May, Lakeshore
Steve Benvenuti, Bay Saint Louis
Sara Benvenuti, Bay Saint Louis
James Wall, Diamondhead
Mary Wall, Diamondhead

LOBRANO HOUSE HOURS

MONDAY	8 a.m.
through	to
FRIDAY	4 p.m.

THE

HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK

COUNTY

Publisher
Gray
Editor
Back

Charles H.

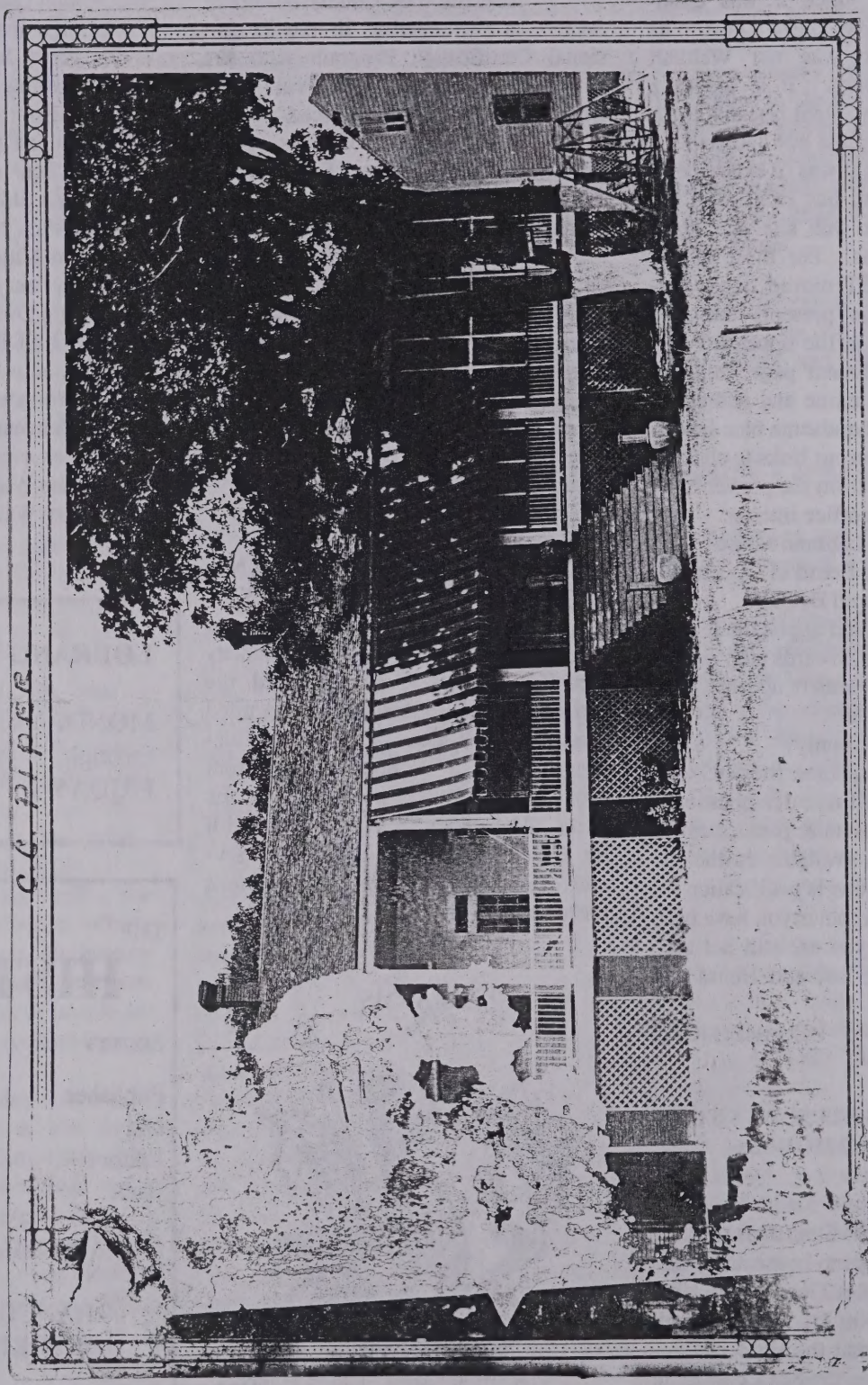
Edith

Published monthly by the

HANCOCK COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

108 Cue Street or P.O. Box
312

IF YOU KNOW THIS HOUSE PLEASE PHONE 467-4090

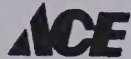


This photo from the 1930s is marked "C. C. Piper". The same house appears in *Along the Gulf* published in 1894 as "The summer residence of Horatio Lange".

Historical Society Supporters

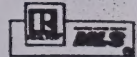
Diamondhead Ace Hardware

443 Yacht Club Drive
Diamondhead, MS 39525
(601) 255-3469
FAX: 255-4888



Jim Grotkowski

SUE ASHMAN, GRI, CRS



227 COLEMAN AVE.
WAVELAND, MS 39576

OFFICE 1-601-467-5454
BEEPER 1-601-850-0037
FAX 1-601-466-4561

Antique Warehouse Mall

(901) 323-0600

Larry Timmerman
Bill Johns

2563 Summer Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Members of American Cut Glass
Association

ComputerBay

Personal Computer Support & Service

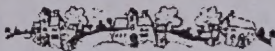
Custom Systems • Upgrades • Repairs

(228) 467-2671

314 HIGHWAY 90 • SUITE 104 • WAVELAND, MS 39576

Jim Henrie & Associates

Residential Real Estate Appraisal Service



James A. Henrie, MRA
Licensed Appraiser (LA-757)

104-A Hickory Lane
Bay St. Louis, MS 39520



Phone: (228) 466-4883 FAX: (228) 463-0218 Email: jimhenrie@delawarems.com

"Enhancing your home inside and out"

COUNTRY HOME
& GARDENS, INC.



(504) 867-3347

71344 Hwy. 59
Abita Springs, LA 70420

Clay Creations

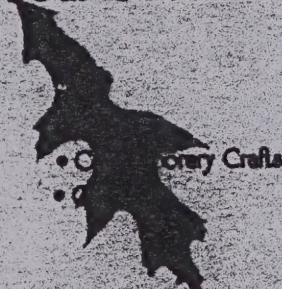
Jenise McCardell

601-466-6747



215 Main St.
Bay St. Louis, MS 39520

Four Seasons



207 Main Street
Bay St. Louis, MS 39520
(601) 467-1188

K. G. Breuninger, IV
Michelle Goudal Linn

Countryside Antiques



151 Highway 90
Waveland, MS 39576-2618
Open Wed. - Sun. 10-5

Est. 1978

Mike Mayo
Tom Cottom
601-467-2338 / Fax 601-467-2223

Mark Kelso

Computer Consultant

\$20/hour

601/452-2351

510 Ponce de Leon Blvd • Pass Christian, MS 39571

HANCOCK COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
312 HWY. 90
BAY ST. LOUIS MS 39520

U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 87
Bay St. Louis, MS.

NON PROFIT
Organization

Post office Box 312
Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi 39520-1000

HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

KATE LOBRANO HOUSE - 108 CUE STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 312 BAY SAINT LOUIS, MISSISSIPPI 39520

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MR.____ MRS.____ MS.____

STREET OR POST OFFICE BOX _____

CITY AND STATE _____

ANNUAL DUES \$12.00 _____ YOUR PHONE _____